



# Agriculture Enterprise Area

Preserve farmland. Protect the environment. Grow the economy.

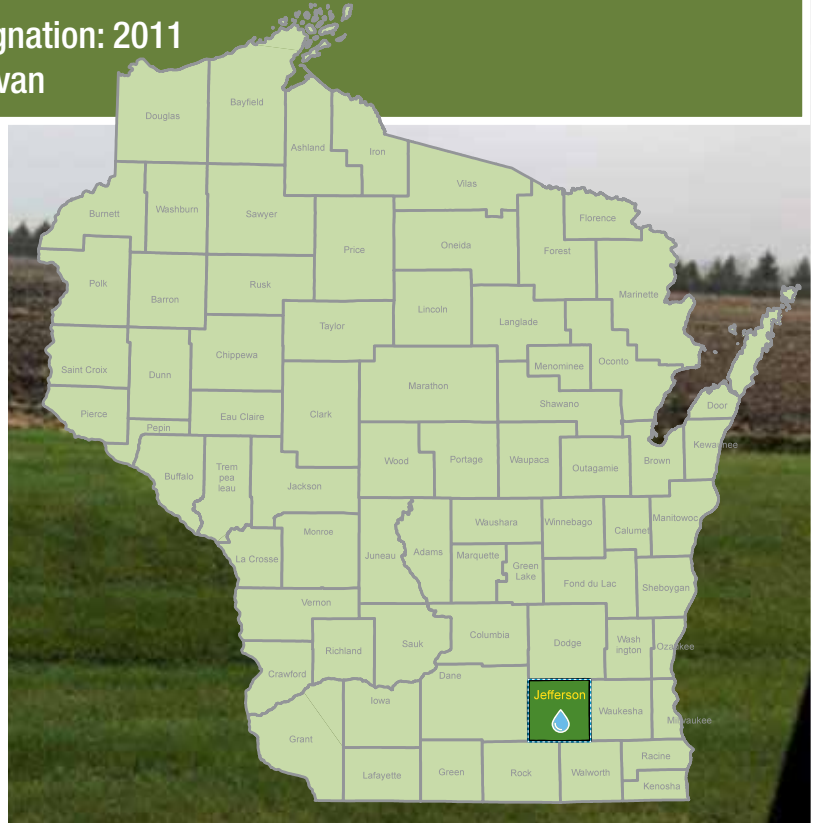
# SNAPSHOT

## Scuppernong

County: Jefferson Acres: 13,859 AEA Designation: 2011  
Municipalities: Cold Spring, Hebron, Palmyra, Sullivan

### Background

The Scuppernong agriculture enterprise area (AEA) was designated in southeastern Jefferson County through the state's first AEA petition cycle in 2011. The name comes from the [Glacial Scuppernong Lake](#) that used to cover the county long ago. The agricultural lands within the AEA are diverse from farm to farm and have been described by petitioners as a "microcosm of Wisconsin agriculture." These diverse operations include small family farms, large scale producers, conventional and specialty crop growers, large animal facilities, and small grazing operations, all working in harmony to support the local economy and provide food to the surrounding areas. Located close to Highway 59 and the Madison and Milwaukee metropolitan areas, the unique landscape of mixed agricultural use makes this a desirable location for agricultural development. The community boasts comprehensive zoning, conservation easements, nutrient management planning, and the Scuppernong AEA, all of which help support, protect, and preserve local agricultural resources.



Through its designation, the Scuppernong AEA community strives to meet the following goals:

- Preserve local farmland for future use
- Layer the AEA with farmland preservation zoning to increase farmland protection
- Promote clustering of farms to strengthen the local farm economy and agribusinesses
- Educate the community about the importance of local agriculture
- Protect the area's groundwater resources

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|  <p><b>5</b><br/>LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</p> |  <p><b>2</b><br/>AG CO-OPS &amp; BUSINESSES</p> |  <p><b>6</b><br/>PRODUCERS &amp; LANDOWNERS</p> |
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The AEA gives landowners the opportunity to sign a farmland preservation agreement and provides a path for landowners to create their own nutrient management plan and explore how new conservation practices can increase their environmental

### Local Support

Long time farmers Margaret and Tom Bulingham own approximately 450 acres of farmland in Jefferson County. Within the Scuppernong AEA, they have a small 60-acre farm covered by a farmland preservation agreement. On this small farm, the Bulinghams try to keep roots in the ground 365 days a year in order to protect the heavy clay soils in these fields from erosion and promote soil health. "There is always something growing year round. We rotate corn, soybeans, and wheat. This year we had soybeans followed by wheat on the field. Once the wheat comes off, we are planting a 13-species mix with legumes, sunflowers, rye, oats, and other plants that break down over the winter," said Margaret. They work with organizations like the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension and several watershed protection programs to help educate other farmers on the benefits of cover crops and share innovative ideas with one another.



This AEA is supported by the following agriculture enterprises and businesses:

-  Egg producers
-  Milk producers
-  Retail food establishments
-  Grain dealer
-  Food processing
-  Aquaculture
-  Livestock dealer
-  Animal truckers
-  Horse farm
-  Grazing enterprises
-  Pasture, row, and forage crop enterprises
-  Multigenerational farms
-  Organic farms, organic businesses
-  Drumlin Area Land Trust
-  Kettle Moraine State Forest, Ice Age Trail
-  Prince's Point Wildlife Area

## County Support

The Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department works with Scuppernong AEA landowners to explore soil health practices, including nutrient management planning, and to maximize the benefits of participating in the Farmland Preservation Program. Nutrient management planning is a foundation for producers to increase soil health by reducing nutrient loss and erosion, and promoting efficient use of all nutrients applied (like fertilizer and manure).

“We offer two types of classes a few times each year. One for new producers creating a plan for the first time and an update class to help those with experience writing their own plan to continue meeting their farm goals,” explained Nancy Lannert, Jefferson County resource conservationist. The small, personal classes offer hands-on training using a nutrient management planning software called SnapPlus. Landowners can work directly with the county to create a personalized plan that addresses their farm’s unique needs.

In order for a nutrient management plan to be effective, it must be implemented on the farm. Lannert works with Joe Strupp, another Jefferson County resource conservationist, to provide additional assistance to landowners on the farm. This ranges from help with maximizing nutrient inputs for a crop, incorporating a new practice like cover crops into their rotation, or integrating a new tillage practice into their cropping system. For many practices like planting cover crops, installing grassed waterways, or managing manure storage abandonment, the county can help offset costs with state cost share dollars and technical support. Regardless of the mechanism, Lannert and Strupp’s goal is to support farmers in the county who want to try new practices and achieve their farm sustainability goals.

## Future Growth




Many landowners in the Scuppernong AEA use the farmland preservation tax credit offered through the county’s farmland preservation zoning district to help offset the cost of implementing their nutrient management plan or other new conservation practices. These landowners are also eligible to claim a higher income tax credit by signing a farmland preservation agreement. By signing an agreement, the landowner devotes the covered land to agriculture and agricultural accessory uses for 15 years while maintaining the land in accordance with state conservation standards. In return, the tax credit increases from \$7.50/acre to \$10/acre and the lands are further protected for future use. Agreements can also be layered with other conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve and Enhancement Program (CREP) offered at both the federal level with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency and the state level with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). Taking these steps can further strengthen a landowners’ commitment to conservation agriculture within a diverse farming community.

Learn more at <https://farmlandpreservation.wi.gov>




To find out if your farmland is located in the Scuppernong AEA, to learn more about the nutrient management planning classes, to sign a farmland preservation agreement, or to learn more about conservation initiatives or resources in Jefferson County, contact the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department at (920) 674-7110 or email [nancy@jeffersoncountywi.gov](mailto:nancy@jeffersoncountywi.gov).

To learn more about AEAs and the Farmland Preservation Program, visit: [https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs\\_Services/AgriculturalEnterpriseAreas.aspx](https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/AgriculturalEnterpriseAreas.aspx). To start or join a current AEA, contact the county land conservation department in the county where your land is located.

## Preserving Local Agriculture

-  Farmland, open space, and agricultural heritage
-  Promote tax credits, farm and agribusiness viability
-  Protect the scenic beauty of the agricultural landscape

## Protecting Natural Resources

-  Soil and water protections
-  Farmer-written nutrient management plans
-  Incentives for conservation practice implementation

*“We are more than happy to go out and weigh anyone’s manure spreader.”*

- Nancy Lannert, Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department talking about the additional support the conservation department can provide for landowners to know how much manure is being put on fields.